CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method of making shingles comprising:

providing a moving asphalt coated sheet having at least an overlay lane and an underlay lane;

discharging blend drops of at least two color blends onto each lane, wherein at least one of the blend drops discharged onto the overlay lane has a different color blend from the color blends of all the blend drops discharged onto the underlay lane;

discharging background granules onto the asphalt coated sheet to form a granule coated sheet; and

removing excess granules from the granule coated sheet.

2. The method of claim 1 including:

discharging blend drops of three color blends onto the overlay lane and discharging blend drops of three color blends onto the underlay lane;

wherein at least one of the blend drops discharged onto the overlay lane has a different color blend from the color blends of all the blend drops discharged onto the underlay lane.

3. The method of claim 1 including:

dividing the granule coated sheet into overlay and underlay strips; and

laminating the overlay and underlay strips together to form shingles.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein one of the blend drops forms a shadow line on a tab or cutout of the shingle.

5. A method of making shingles comprising:

providing a moving asphalt coated sheet having an overlay lane, a middle lane and an underlay lane;

discharging blend drops of at least two color blends onto each lane, wherein each lane has a combination of color blends for the blend drops different from the combination of color blends for the blend drops of the other two lanes;

discharging background granules onto the asphalt coated sheet to form a granule coated sheet;

removing excess granules from the granule coated sheet;

dividing the granule coated sheet into continuous overlay, middle and underlay strips; and

laminating the continuous overlay, middle and underlay strips together to form trilaminate shingles.

6. The method of claim 5 in which:

the step of removing excess granules includes collecting excess granules in a backfall hopper that segregates excess granules from lane to lane; and

the step of applying background granules includes applying to each lane excess granules removed from that lane.

7. A plurality of laminated shingles, each shingle comprising an overlay sheet and an underlay sheet;

the overlay sheets having a prime area that is substantially covered with granules, including one or more blend drops from a first group of blend drops of at least two color blends;

the underlay sheets being substantially covered with granules, including one or more blend drops from a second group of blend drops of at least two color blends;

wherein at least one of the color blends of a blend drop of the first group of blend drops is a different color from the color blends of all of the blend drops of the second group.

8. The plurality of shingles of claim 7 in which:

the first group of blend drops comprises three color blends, and

the second group of blend drops comprises three color blends.

9. A plurality of trilaminated shingles, each shingle comprising an overlay sheet, a middle sheet and an underlay sheet;

the overlay sheets having a prime area that is substantially covered with granules, including one or more blend drops from a first group of blend drops of at least two color blends;

the underlay sheets being substantially covered with granules, including one or more blend drops from a second group of blend drops of at least two color blends;

the middle sheets being substantially covered with granules, including one or more blend drops from a third group of blend drops of at least two color blends;

wherein the collection of the color blends for the blend drops of each of the first, second and third groups of blend drops is different from the collection of color blends for the blend drops of the other groups of blend drops.